

E.S. FARBER spends her days writing at the East Hampton Library, which has a rich pirate collection that she mined while writing this book. She also works with the librarians there to create spelling bees, host book discussions, teach comic book classes, and coach the Battle of the Books team. She has authored numerous chapter books, beginning reading books, and manga books. She lives in Wainscott, NY.

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JACKET DESIGN BY LAUREN MICHELLE SMITH.



That's me, Fish Finelli!
My real name is Norman after my Uncle Norman. Fish was my first word, which I said on my uncle's boat when a mean bluefish took a chomp out of his finger.



Roger has lived next door to me our whole lives. His hobbies include reading vampire comics, playing pranks on his sister (rubber tarantula in her slipper), and making funny wisecracks.



T.J. (Timothy Jr.) is the grand master of snacks. He's always good for a handful of sour gummies or barbecue potato chips to keep us going on our adventures.



**CAPTAIN KIDD
(c. 1654-1701)**

William Kidd was hired by King William III of England to hunt down pirate ships and take their treasure. Some people thought he was a pirate. According to legend, he buried his treasure before being captured in New York. He was hanged at Execution Dock in 1701.

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FISH Finelli!

SEAGULLS DON'T EAT PICKLES

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FISH Finelli



•SEAGULLS DON'T EAT PICKLES•

BY E.S. FARBER • ILLUSTRATED BY JASON BEENE

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A BET'S A BET

When the Whooping Hollow town bully, Bryce Billings, bets Fish Finelli that he can't find Captain Kidd's treasure, Fish and his best buds Roger and T.J. must embark on a quest to find the long-lost booty! Between sneaking into the library to track down Captain Kidd's treasure map, stowing away on a boat, and trespassing on the legendary Lyons Island, Fish and his friends are up to their necks in "goose poop!" Will Fish be able to find Captain Kidd's treasure, make Bryce eat his words, and win the bet?

Chock-full of secret handshakes, black-and-white illustrations, and cool sidebars, the first book in this summertime series is a must read any time of year!



CODE ORANGE

It all started the morning I broke into my lobster piggy bank. I had chosen a basin wrench for the job. It's a good tool for a delicate operation. I know this because my dad is a plumber and taught me lots of stuff about tools.

CLINK! CLINK! I shook the lobster a few times.

It sure sounded like there was a lot of money in there. I hoped it was at least \$54.53. That was exactly how much I needed to buy the Seagull. In case you're wondering, the seagull I'm talking about isn't the aquatic bird. It's one of the finest motor boat engines ever made. And I had to get it soon. See, I've been fixing up this boat with my best friends, Roger and T.J. We want to race it in the Captain Kidd Classic, the biggest boat race of the summer.

I held the lobster bank with my fingers over the part on the shell that read *Lobster-Palooza—Where Lobsters Rock!*

The Lobster-Palooza festival happens every summer in the town of Whooping Hollow where I live. I won the lobster bank for bringing in a blue lobster I caught with my Uncle Norman. Only one in about three million lobsters is blue, by the way.

I put the gripper end of the wrench into the Lobster-Palooza lobster's pincer claw. I pulled gently. Nothing happened, so I pulled a little harder.

CRACK! The pincer claw snapped off. Money flew up in the air.

PLOP! Dimes and pennies landed in the fishbowl. Nikola Tesla, my goldfish, started swimming around like crazy. As I was fishing the coins out of Nikola Tesla's bowl, I heard a scream. "Help! Ugly-Buggly!"

"Fish!" my mom called up the stairs. "Help your sister, please. I'm baking!"

My real name is Norman, by the way, but I've been called Fish ever since I can remember. Uncle Norman, who I'm named after, said it was my first word. I was on his boat when an angry bluefish took a chomp out of his finger. I laughed and said "Fish."

"Aaahhh!" my four-year-old sister, Feenie, shrieked again. I took off down the hall.

“It’s in there!” said Feenie, moving her arms so her fairy wings flapped up and down like she was trying to fly. “And it’s the biggest one ever!”

The Ugly-Buggly jumped out from behind the toilet. It was huge. Bigger than a praying mantis, with long brown tentacles and legs as fat as noodles. I didn’t want to tell Feenie, but she was right. It was the biggest one I’d ever seen. I definitely needed help.

I raced back to my room. Dude, our old black cat, was sleeping on my bottom bunk.

“I’m on a mission, Dude, so scram!”

Dude gave me a look, but he hopped off the bed. I reached under the mattress and pulled out my walkie-talkie. I pressed the PTT (Push To Talk) button. “Roger,” the walkie-talkie crackled to life. I peered out my bedroom window, which looked right into



WALKIE-TALKIE

Developed during World War II for military communications via air waves and first called a Handheld Transceiver (nicknamed a Handie-talkie), it was both a transmitter and a receiver. Later called a walkie-talkie, it has a half-duplex channel so only one radio can transmit at a time, although many can listen.



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Roger's bedroom window. We've been next door neighbors for almost ten years, ever since we were born.

"This is Roger!" came Roger's staticky, walkie-talkie voice. "Do you read me?"

"Read and copy!" I said.

"Roger, over and out!" said Roger.

"Aaahhh!" Feenie screamed again.

"Fish!" said my mom.

"Whale Creek in fifteen?"

"Sure, but Roger—"

"Roger, ten-four, over and out," said Roger's staticky voice.

"Roger, no," I said.

"Roger, it's—"

"Roger that!" said Roger. "Over and—"

"No, Roger, I mean you, Roger, not roger," I said.

"Oh," said Roger. "Roger."

"Will you stop rogering me, Roger?" I said.

"Wilco," said Roger.

"We've got a situation!"

"What level?" asked Roger.

"Code Orange!"

"No way!"

"Way!" I said.

"I'm there," said Roger. "Secure the prisoner. You know, I got your back, dude."

"Speaking of backs, don't forget the Bug Patrol Emergency Backpack!"



UGLY-BUGGLY

When I got back to the bathroom, Feenie was waving her magic wand up and down in front of the shower curtain.

“What are you doing with that wand?” I asked. “Trying to make the bug disappear?”

“As if,” said Feenie. “I’m only a FAPIT, you know.”

“What’s a FAPIT?” I shouldn’t have asked.

“Fairy Princess in Training,” said Feenie. “See, to disaway something you need to be a FUFAP, you know, a Full Fairy Princess.”

“*Disaway* is not a word, Fee.”

“Is so,” said Feenie, nodding her head up and down so hard her pigtails flew up beside her ears. “It’s a magic word.”

“What does it mean then?”

“You have to be a FAPIT to understand,” said Feenie.

“Oh, brother,” I said.

The back door slammed and Roger appeared at the top of the stairs. He was lugging an orange backpack with a big sticker of a tooth on it that read KEEP YOUR SMILE IN STYLE. He got it the last time he went to the dentist and had ten cavities.

“We need a Number Three,” I said.

“Number Three?” asked Roger, his brown eyes widening. “We’ve never had a Number Three before.”

“I told you it was a Code Orange.”

But when we got back to the bathroom, the tub was empty. The three of us eyed one another.

“Where’d it go?” whispered Feenie.

“Down the drain?” said Roger.

“Impossible,” I said. “All insects have exoskeletons, you know, skeletons on the outsides of their bodies. So no way a big one, like an Ugly-Buggly, can squeeze through tiny holes like there are in a drain.”

“Fish, how could you forget the most important rule of Bug Patrol Operations?” said Roger. “Never underestimate the sly and sinister mind of a creepy-crawlie.” He pulled back the shower curtain.

The Ugly-Buggly hopped-out from behind a fold. We all jumped.

“Aaahhh!”

“See, super-sly, just like I told you.” Roger turned to the bug. “OK, Ugly-Buggly, we’ve got you surrounded. It’s white flag time.”

Roger reached into the backpack and pulled out a magnifying glass, a pair of scissors, and a half-eaten tuna sandwich. The whole bathroom suddenly stank like rotten fish.

“Pee-yew!”

“So *that’s* what happened to my lunch,” said Roger. Next he pulled out a jumbo-sized Cheezy Cheezers container. It had a number three on it.

“Containment Sealer Device?” I asked.

“Right here,” said Roger. He took out a piece of pink notebook paper with a heart on it that read: *Beck, you rock!* “It’s Summer’s love letter to Beck Billings. Perfect Contain-



WHITE FLAG

Waving something white is the worldwide symbol of surrender. It started way back in ancient China and Rome. When one side didn't want to fight anymore, they would wave something white on a stick. It was way easier for the other side to see than putting your shield over your head.

ment Sealer Device, right?”

“How did you get it?” I asked. I had a hunch that Summer, who was Roger’s older sister, would not be happy to know we were about to use her private love letter to trap an Ugly-Buggly. Beck happens to be Bryce Billings’ older brother and a star lacrosse player, and every girl at Marine Middle has a crush on him.

“I found it in her trash,” said Roger. “And I figured, hey, ‘Reduce, reuse, recycle.’ Just trying to help save the planet.”

Driving Summer crazy was one of Roger’s favorite pastimes.

“I’ll handle the container, you back me up with the Containment Sealer Device,” said Roger.

“How about if I do the container and you—”

The bug jumped again.

“Aaahhh!”

Roger held up the Cheezy Cheezers container. Then he plopped it over the bug.

I picked up the pink paper and took a deep breath. Slowly, I slid the Containment Sealer Device toward the container where the Ugly-Buggly was hopping like crazy, trying to get out.

“On three,” I said to Roger. “One . . . two . . . three!”

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Roger lifted up the container as I slid the paper underneath. We watched for a moment as the bug hopped up and down on Summer's heart.

"Mission accomplished," said Roger. "It's time for the release."

I stood up carefully, my hand keeping the Containment Sealer Device in place. Roger was next to me, his hand on top of the container. Slowly we walked out of the bathroom. Side by side, we started down the stairs.

"Open the door, Feenie!"

Feenie ran ahead. Roger and I followed her across the hall. The door was open. We were almost there when there was a bark. Something large, pink, and fluffy bounded into the room.

"What happened to my dog?" I said, staring at the pink princess quilt tied around him with a jump rope.

"Woof!" barked Shrimp, wagging his long brown and white tail. Everything about Shrimp is big. We didn't know he was part Saint Bernard when we got him as a puppy.

"He's not a dog," said Feenie. "He's a magic horse."

Just then Shrimp started sniffing like crazy. He looked at our outstretched hands. He saw we were holding some



thing. He sniffed the air. He stared at Roger. Oh, no, I thought. The tuna fish sandwich! It was in the backpack on Roger's back.

"Don't, Shrimp!" I said.

But it was too late. Shrimp jumped and knocked into Roger. The container flew out of his hand.



THE TREASURE IS PLASTIC?!

It took us three tries to get that Ugly-Buggly out of the house. It was a record, even for a Code Orange. After that I headed back up to my room to count the money that had fallen out of the lobster bank. I piled it up in stacks—quarters, dimes, nickels, pennies. And three dollar bills. I counted it slowly and carefully.

\$27.51! WHAT????!!

I counted it again. \$27.51. The Seagull motor cost \$54.53. That meant I needed a whole \$27.02. WHOA!

I sighed and slid down the banister. I had to think of some way to get \$27.02 fast, or the summer would be over. But how???

"Mom, I'm going to Whale Creek," I said as I walked into the kitchen.

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Whale Creek isn't really a creek, by the way. And the water is much too shallow for a whale to swim in it. But it's right by the cove that leads to Whooping Hollow Harbor, where there's a giant boulder that people used to stand on to look for whales. If somebody spotted one, they would climb a tree and wave their shirt around and yell, "Whale off!" Then the settlers in the town and the Native Americans would go harpoon it. They would split up the whale meat and the blubber (*good for oil to light lamps*) and this weird stuff ambergris (*used to make perfume*) and the teeth and bones (*good for carving*).

"Take Feenie with you," said my mom, just as Roger skateboarded through the back door.

"Aw, Mom."

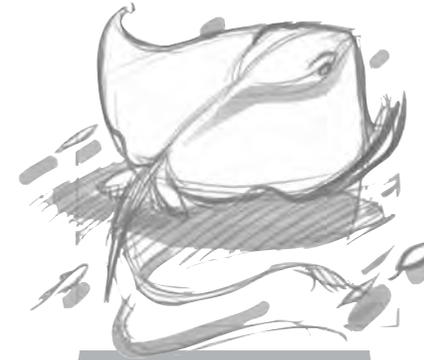
"Fish, my soufflé needs quiet," said my mom, with a protective glance at the oven. "Or it will fall."

"No problem, Mrs. F.," said Roger. "Heave-ho, ready to go?" He waved his pirate sword and grinned at Feenie.

"Mom," I said. "She'll just get in the way."

"Fish!" said my mom, giving me her stingray glare. When she does that, I know she means business.

"All right, but you have to be the prisoner on the pirate ship," I told Feenie.



STINGRAY

Part of the group of rays related to sharks. It has a long, barbed sting on its tail.

"FAPITS can't be prisoners," said Feenie.

"Don't worry, Mrs. F.," said Roger. "I won't let any evil pirates hurt a hair on her lovely head."

My mom smiled. So did Feenie. I rolled my eyes as I grabbed my skateboard and my sword. I made it myself out of plywood, with duct tape for the hilt.

As soon as we got outside, Roger pushed off and ollied down the curb. I jumped on my board and pushed off after him. Shrimp barked and lunged after me.

"Wait for me!" called Feenie.

I looked back. She was still standing in front of our house with one foot on her scooter.

"I'd better pull you," I said. "Or the tide will get there before we do."

I took the rope out of my pocket and tied it around my waist. Then I tied the other end to the scooter.

"Hold on tight!" I said.

Off we went to the end of Cinnamon Street. Shrimp

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barked and raced around us.

“Dude, I beat your best time by five whole seconds,” said Roger when we got up the hill at the end of Red Fox Lane. He pointed to his stopwatch.

“I’m not racing, Roger,” I said, trying to catch my breath. “I’m towing.”

“Safety first!” said Feenie, flapping her fairy wings.

“Safety first!” came a high, squeaky voice from somewhere close by.

“Who said that?” asked Feenie.

“Me!” Mmm popped up from behind the Mahoneys’ fence. She was wearing sparkly wings just like Feenie’s. “I’m a FAPIT!”

“I’m a FAPIT, too!” said Feenie.

Mmm’s real name is Margaret Mary Mahoney, but she’s been called Mmm since she was born. Margaret was too hard for her brothers T.J. and Mickey to say.

“Where’s T.J.?” I asked.

“Doing something to his bike,” said Mmm.

T.J. was always doing something to his bike. He has this old ten-speed his dad picked up on a carting job. I helped him put new spokes on the wheels. But he’s always getting

flats, and then we have to patch the tires.

As if he had supersonic hearing and could hear us talking about him, T.J. came wheeling his bike down the driveway.

“I was about to look for you guys,” said T.J. He took a bite out of a mushy candy bar that looked like it had taken a trip through the washing machine. “Check it out,” he said, nodding his curly red head at a gray box strapped to the back of his bike.

“What’s in it?”

“Treasure,” answered T.J., wiping chocolate off his mouth with his sleeve.

“Come on, T.J.,” I said. “The only treasure that’s buried anywhere near here is Captain Kidd’s, and nobody’s ever found it.”

Some people say it’s buried on Lyons Island, where Captain Kidd landed, right across the harbor from Whooping Hollow. Some say it’s near the old lighthouse at the bottom of Money Pond, which is bottomless and why it’s never been dug up. Lots of treasure hunters have hunted for it for years and years. It’s the biggest unsolved mystery in Whooping Hollow.

“Well, it looks like I just did,” said T.J. “I was at the mall with my dad. He was hauling up the dumpster, and there it was.”

“You’re telling me you found Captain Kidd’s treasure at the mall?!” said Roger.

“Uh-huh.”

I eyed the box. “But it’s plastic. A real treasure chest isn’t made of plastic.”

“Oh, yeah?” asked T.J. “If what’s inside this box isn’t treasure . . . I’ll eat my . . . hat.”

He popped open the lock on the chest. Our eyes opened wide. The chest was filled with gold.

“Snap!” said Roger. “We’re rich!”

“Hold your horses, guys,” I said, picking up a gold coin. It was plastic, just like the chest. In tiny letters on the bottom it said MADE IN CHINA.

“It’s from China, T.J.,” I said.

“China?” said T.J. “China’s those plates and teacups and stuff that me and Mickey and Mmm aren’t supposed to touch.”

Roger and I laughed. “It’s not china like dishes,” I said. “These gold coins are made in China, the country China, as in on the continent of Asia near Japan. Home of Confucius

